

Project Funding 2020-2025

Since inception, the Children's Cancer Foundation and its charity partners have funded project contributions to the value of **\$56,487,707.**

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The Children's Cancer Foundation together with its funding partners has committed \$12,343,790 across 28 projects from 2020 through to 2025. Funding includes salaries for hospital and research staff, laboratory consumables and family resources.

Research



Project: Hudson Monash Paediatric Precision Medicine Program – Phase 2
Focus: Brain cancer, central nervous system tumours and Wilm's tumour
Institute: Hudson Institute of Medical Research and Monash Children's Hospital
Recipient: A/Prof. Ron Firestein
Funding: \$4,967,221 over 2 years

Overview: The Hudson Monash Paediatric Precision Medicine Program hopes to significantly improve treatment for childhood cancer patients with the greatest unmet clinical need – those diagnosed with brain cancers and solid tumours. The program utilises living organoids developed from individual patient's tumour cells to conduct functional genomic analysis to identify new therapeutic treatments and to repurpose existing treatments. To date the program has collected tissue samples from 223 patients (including collaborator sites) and successfully established 3-dimensional cell cultures ('organoids') of paediatric solid tumours as well as 2-dimensional cell cultures. The program has so far conducted over 200 high-throughput drug screens and identified a number of promising therapeutic targets for paediatric brain cancers and sarcomas. Working in collaboration with the Zero Childhood Cancer program, the paediatric cancer Molecular Tumour Board will integrate molecular and functional diagnostic results into clinical management of childhood cancer patients, by providing expertise and recommendations on the clinical implications of findings that arise from molecular analyses. The Australian Lions Childhood Cancer Research Foundation funds the Senior Biobank Specialist component of the program.

Project: Children's Cancer Foundation Chair

Focus: Childhood and adolescent cancers

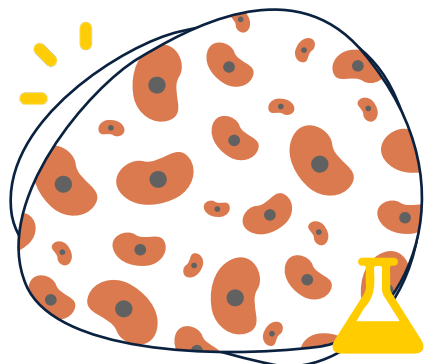
Institute: University of Melbourne

Funding: \$6 million for perpetual funding of the endowed chair, matched by \$6 million from the funding partners

Funding Partners: Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Royal Children's Hospital, Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Overview: Establish the Children's Cancer Foundation Chair, Victoria's first perpetually endowed Chair, to be based at the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre.

The Chair, a leading international clinician-scientist, will provide academic leadership in personalised clinical care and research in paediatric cancer and provide support and mentorship to facilitate growth of the discipline, and incorporation of leading edge research insights into routine clinical practice for children in Victoria and beyond. The Chair will play a key leadership role in collaborative research directed towards improving clinical care of children with cancer both nationally and internationally.



Project: Translational Studies Leveraging the SIOPEX Neuroblastoma Clinical Trial

Focus: Neuroblastoma

Institute: University of New South Wales

Funding: \$671,270 over 3 years

Overview: Translational research leveraging patient participation in the SIOPEX High Risk Neuroblastoma clinical trial also funded by the Foundation. This study aims to understand relapse, improve residual disease detection and develop pre-clinical testing models to identify better therapies for high-risk neuroblastoma patients.

Research

Project: Children's Cancer Foundation Clinical Research Fellowship
Focus: Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia
Institute: Murdoch Children's Research Institute and The Royal Children's Hospital
Recipient: Dr Seong Lin Khaw
Funding Partner: Victorian Cancer Agency
Funding: \$1,029,000 over 4 years (2017-21), plus \$341,100 from Murdoch Children's.
Overview: Research project to improve the effectiveness of treatment in children with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia who respond poorly to or relapse following standard-of-care therapy. The key outcome from this research project is to translate biological data to improve treatment precision and effectiveness, particularly with the use of newly developed drugs.



Project: My Room Clinical Research Fellowship program
Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital and Murdoch Children's Research Institute
Recipient 1: Dr Stacie Wang, Matthew Rathbone My Room Clinical Research Fellowship
Recipient 2: Dr Claudia Toro, Peter McGrath My Room Clinical Research Fellowship
Funding Partner: My Room (100%)
Funding: \$495,331 over 3 years
Overview: Salary funding for a 2-year clinical research fellowship training program, with a split of 0.8: 0.2 EFT research and clinical time. This program is an investment in training the next generation of oncologists in translational research skills. Two fellowships will be funded under this program.

Project: My Room Clinical Research Training Fellowship
Institute: Monash Children's Hospital and Hudson Institute of Medical Research
Funding Partner: My Room (100%)
Recipient: Dr Nataliya Zhukova
Funding: \$375,000 over 3 years
Overview: Salary funding for a 3-year clinical research fellowship training program, with a 0.8:0.2 EFT split of research and clinical time. This program is an investment in training the next generation of oncologists in translational research skills.



Project: International Collaborations in Paediatric Cancer Research
Institute: Hudson Institute of Medical Research
Funding: \$49,500 over 3 years. Renewal - funded since 2018
Overview: Funding of on-site visits during the annual Childhood Cancer Research Symposium for national and international researchers and clinicians from prestigious universities and health services. The aim is to advance the Hudson Monash Paediatric Precision Medicine Program (Project 219) by developing and strengthening collaboration with international experts in paediatric precision medicine and educating and catalysing scientific innovation in childhood cancer research and clinical care.

Research



Project: Australian Lions Childhood Cancer Research Foundation Clinical Research Fellowship
Focus: Brain cancers: Medulloblastoma and Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma
Institute: Hudson Institute of Medical Research, with Monash Children's Hospital and Monash University

Recipient: Dr Sara Khan

Funding Partner: Australian Lions Childhood Cancer Research Foundation (100%)

Funding: \$525,000 over 4 years

Overview: Salary funding and laboratory consumables for a paediatric oncologist to investigate new therapeutic options for two of the most prevalent and aggressive paediatric brain tumours – medulloblastoma and Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG). Key outcomes will be the development of a rapid and cost-effective clinical tool to determine the medulloblastoma molecular subtype; new DIPG gene targets for potential therapeutic intervention; and preclinical validation of potential pharmacological epigenetic modifiers of DIPG.

Project: PhD Scholars Program

Focus: All childhood cancers

Institute: Hudson Institute of Medical Research

Funding Partner: Hudson Institute of Medical Research (50%)

Recipient: PhD Scholar #1 Claire Shi, PhD Scholar #2 Sarah Parackal

Funding: \$318,106 over 5 years

Overview: Funding for three PhD students in paediatric precision medicine. The key aims are to develop a doctoral training program focused on key research themes of precision medicine, enable hypothesis-driven research that directly arises from the Hudson Monash Paediatric Precision Medicine Program (Project 219), and to strengthen cross-institutional collaborations (local, national, and international).



Clinical Trials



Project: Clinical Trials Manager

Focus: All childhood cancers

Institute: Monash Children's Hospital

Recipient: Irina Arzhintar

Funding: \$380,507 over 5 years

Overview: Salary funding for a Clinical Trials Manager to lead the clinical trials unit. The key outcome is to increase the portfolio of trials open, and the number of children enrolled in clinical trials accessing new treatments and innovative drugs.

Project: National Clinical Trials Investigating Stem Cell Transplantation and Personalised Medicine

Focus: All childhood cancers

Institute: Sydney Children's Hospital

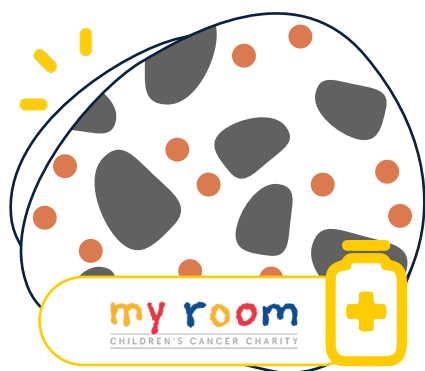
Recipient: A/Prof. David Ziegler

Funding: \$316,218 over 3 years

Overview: Salary funding for a Clinical Trial Associate coordinating two clinical trials: (1) PRISM (PREclSion Medicine for Paediatric Oncology Patients) study targeting 300 paediatric and adolescent patients with high-risk malignancies (expected survival < 30%). The key outcome is feasibility of precision medicine in a clinical setting, outcomes of patients treated and review of psychological impact and economic viability; (2) Paßlo study recruiting >24 patients to test a novel technology that may allow safe and effective stem cell transplant from a patient's parent (when stem cell transplant is the only available cure and a matched sibling or unrelated donor is unavailable).



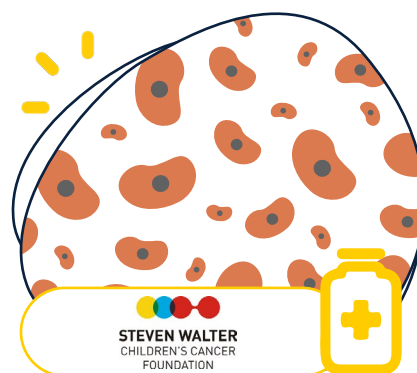
Clinical Trials



Project: Acute Myeloid Leukaemia National Clinical Trial (Myechild01)
Focus: Acute myeloid leukaemia
Institute: Led by Dr Andrew Moore, Queensland Children's Hospital, Brisbane; with nine participating hospitals in Australia and New Zealand
Funding Partner: My Room (100%)
Funding: \$1,055,245 over 5 years
Overview: National clinical trial recruiting children with acute myeloid leukaemia across nine participating hospitals. This trial provides access to a new drug currently unavailable to Australian children, even on compassionate grounds. The key outcome is to determine which of the current treatments combined with the new drug will provide the best chance of survival.

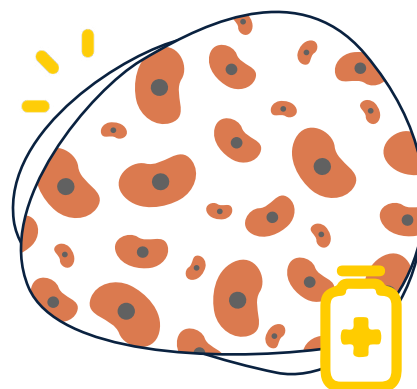
Project: SIOPEN Neuroblastoma Clinical Trials
Focus: Neuroblastoma
Institute: Sydney Children's Hospital
Funding Partner: Steven Walter Children's Cancer Foundation
Recipient: A/Prof. Toby Trahair
Funding: \$530,965

Overview: Funding for two international clinical trials and a registry study targeting high risk, low and intermediate risk and infant neuroblastoma opening at hospitals across Australia and New Zealand. The SIOPEN high risk neuroblastoma-2 trial focuses on improving survival for patients with the lowest chance of cure (<50%). The SIOPEN LINES trial is for children with less aggressive tumours and incorporates refined tumour analysis and staging techniques to more easily identify biologically favourable tumours (these patients will receive less intensive treatments) and unfavourable tumours.



Project: Neuro-oncology Research Coordinator
Focus: Clinical trials for solid and brain cancer patients
Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital
Funding Partner: Marcus Rosin Fund (100%)
Funding: \$312,217 over 3 years
Overview: Salary funding to coordinate clinical trials for all solid and brain tumour patients within the Children's Cancer Centre, support a suite of three molecular clinical trials: PRISM, AIM and MNP, as well as supporting the opening of further early phase clinical trials for solid and brain tumour patients. The key outcomes are to increase clinical trial enrolment of children under treatment for cancer and to ensure that every child has access to the same pathway to timely and accurate treatment, improved drug access and novel therapies.

Project: Nurse and Allied Health Staff Professional Development
Focus: Oncology Staff Development
Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital and Monash Children's Hospital
Funding: \$50,000 per year
Overview: This funding is designed to assist the professional development of registered nurses and allied health and psycho social health professionals directly involved in the care of children with cancer. The programs are administered within the human-resources framework provided by the hospitals.



Clinical Care



Project: My Room Oncology Social Worker

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital

Funding Partner: My Room (100%)

Funding: \$396,154 over 3 years. Renewal – funded since 1998

Overview: Salary funding for a Social Worker to support families with children undergoing treatment within the Children's Cancer Centre. In addition to salary funding, My Room provides a Patient Amenity Fund which supports families of children undergoing transplant for non-malignant conditions.

Project: Art Therapists

Focus: In-hospital patient care

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital

Recipients: Alexandra Lederman and Tilly Dawson

Funding: \$721,745 over 5 years. Renewal – funded since 2010

Overview: Salary funding to provide art therapy services enabling children under treatment for cancer to process their emotions such as anxiety, depression, hopes and fears through art. Through non-verbal and safe individual and group sessions, children can use creative avenues while socialising with other children sharing similar cancer experiences.



Project: Music Therapist

Focus: In-hospital patient care

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital

Recipient: Melina Roberts

Funding: \$197,500 over 3 years. Renewal – funded since 2007

Overview: Salary funding for a Music Therapist to provide clinical music therapy services (songwriting, active music making, therapeutic music lessons, improvisation, relaxation) to children under treatment within the Children's Cancer Centre. Music therapy improves children's psychological adjustment to cancer treatment and promotes positive coping skills.

Project: Physiotherapy Service

Focus: In-hospital patient care

Institute: Monash Children's Hospital

Funding Partner: My Room (100%)

Funding: \$147,355 over 3 years

Overview: Salary funding for two physiotherapists to initiate, implement and evaluate a dedicated physiotherapy service for Monash Children's Cancer Centre to provide high quality assessment and intervention to all children and adolescents at diagnosis and throughout their cancer treatment.



Clinical Care



Project: Dietitian

Focus: In-hospital patient care

Institute: Monash Children's Hospital

Funding Partner: My Room (100%)

Funding: \$137,526 over 3 years. Supplement of 0.4 EFT to the 0.3 EFT funded 2010-17 and now embedded in hospital budget.

Overview: Salary funding for a Dietitian to provide intensive nutritional support to children with cancer, which is associated with improved survival rates and treatment tolerance. This EFT increase ensures all children have access to a full-time nutritional service to optimise their health during cancer treatment.

Project: Music Therapists (0.2 EFT)

Focus: In-hospital patient care

Institute: Monash Children's Hospital

Funding: \$119,839 over 5 years (2018-23). Renewal – funded since 2009

Overview: Salary funding for a Music Therapist to provide clinical musical therapy services to help children across the inpatient, day cancer and outpatient settings of the Monash Children's Cancer Centre adjust to their diagnosis and treatment. Music Therapy aims to provide positive coping-related behaviours and reduce anxiety for patients and their families during procedures.



Family Support



Project: Family Counselling Service

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital and Monash Children's Hospital

Funding: \$429,000 over 5 years.

Overview: Funding for face-to-face counselling with a psychologist for children with cancer, their parents or siblings. Recent research has confirmed both the unmet demand for and benefit of psychological support to help families through cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Project: The Beaded Journey

Focus: In-hospital patient support

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital, Monash Children's Hospital and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

Funding Partner: Lillies for Hope

Funding: \$79,900 over 5 years. Renewal – funded since 2008

Overview: The Beaded Journey, a therapeutic program that gives children the opportunity to tell their personal cancer story by marking key medical and non-medical events throughout their treatment with a special bead.



Family

Project: Family Connect

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital

Overview: A weekly morning tea in the Children's Cancer Centre at The Royal Children's Hospital to meet and connect with other families in a relaxed atmosphere. Each week, Family Connect hosts an interactive and creative activity for children and their families, featuring a special presenter.



Project: Family Gym Memberships

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital

Funding Partner: Inside Out Performance

Overview: The Foundation secured four 12-month gym memberships at the independent gym based at The Royal Children's Hospital for parents of children in the Children's Cancer Centre. The key outcome is to support parents in improving their wellbeing while based at the hospital for prolonged periods caring for their children.

Project: Family Resource Coordinator

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: The Royal Children's Hospital

Recipient: Merridy Justice

Funding Partner: Portland House Foundation (\$85,000)

Funding: \$273,397 over 3 years. Renewal – funded since 2006

Overview: Salary funding for a non-medical staff member providing practical and emotional support for children and families across inpatients, outpatients and day oncology. The Family Resource Coordinator facilitates discussion between staff and families, and provides day-to-day support services through play, social activities and respite.



Project: Family and Community Resource Officer

Focus: In-hospital family support

Institute: Monash Children's Hospital

Recipient: Jessica Kelly

Funding: \$41,483 over 3 years. Supplement of 0.2 EFT to 0.4 EFT funded 2007-17 and now embedded in hospital budget.

Overview: Salary funding for a non-medical staff member providing practical and emotional support services for children and their families. The Family and Community Resource Officer facilitates discussion between staff and families, and provides day-to-day support services through play, recreation, social activities and respite.



(03) 7001 1450

Private Bag 6060
Richmond VIC 3121

hello@childrenscancerfoundation.com.au
www.childrenscancerfoundation.com.au